

# The Middletown Transcript.

VOL. XIV.

MIDDLETOWN, DELAWARE, FRIDAY AFTERNOON, JANUARY 7, 1881.

NO. 2

## Miscellaneous Advs.

**ELLIOTT, JOHNSON & CO.,**

Bankers and Brokers,  
WILMINGTON, DELAWARE.

SPECIAL ATTENTION GIVEN TO TELEGRAPHIC ORDERS IN STOCKS, BONDS, &c., which are bought and sold on commission only, either on margin or for investment in New York or Philadelphia. We have direct private wires running from our office to the New York and Philadelphia Stock Exchanges, enabling us to furnish quotations simultaneously as the sales are made.

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HOSIERY, from the CHEAPEST to the BEST, at astonishing low prices.

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MY SALOON is now open day and evening, where I am prepared to serve

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My Stock will consist principally of the line of goods formerly kept by T. E. Lindley. mar-20-17

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THE FOLLOWING STOCK IS OFFERED AT PRIVATE SALE.

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Unsurpassed for farm work.

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Coming four years old in Spring, by Tankerville, well broken, very handsome and stylish; standing 16 hands.

1 HORREL COIT, coming 3 years old in spring; nearly sixteen hands; handsome, unbroken.

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The above must be sold as the subscriber intends to quit farming. Terms made to suit parties, and any further information will be given by addressing

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nov-6-3m

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jan-10-1f

**AGENTS. AGENTS. AGENTS.**

**JOSHUA ALLEN'S WIFE**

Has "ROTTER" a NEW BOOK.

Best and funniest of all.

**"MY WAYWARD PARTNER."**

OR, THE ACCOUNT OF SAMANTHA'S TROUBLES AND SUFFERINGS WITH HER HUSBAND JOSHUA, ETC.

This will be the Leading Book of the Season to Sell.

AGENTS WANTED in every Town. Don't miss it, but send for Circular at once, and secure territory, to

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## Story.

### A CONTROVERSY WITH CUPID.

'Little wretch! I hate him. We have never had a moment's peace since he took possession of the house,' declared Polly Patten, with a stamp of her foot.

The 'he' referred to was not, as might be supposed, a tramp or a sheriff's officer, not even a poor relation, or an Irish lutler, or a heathen Chinese. Not at all. The object of Polly's wrath was a personage lifted up, as it would seem, by virtue of his position, above human criticism as above human rules, a myth, an unknown entity—no other, in fact, than the little god cupid himself. He and his machinations had of late wrought changes—woful ones, Polly thought—in the constitution of the Patten family; and to her imagination represented all manner of discomfort and discomfiture, the alteration of plans, the blight of hopes—inventions and cross-purposes without end. She felt toward him a good, honest, hearty hostility, as one may toward an opponent of flesh and blood, as she sat in her bedroom, inveighing upon the subject to her special friend Susan Gilmore, who was perched beside her on the broad window-sill.

'Oh, it's all very well to laugh,' she went on; 'but just wait till you try it yourself. All last year was given up, you know, to marrying Helen. Her trousseau, and her presents, and her furnishing—nothing else was thought of or spoken of for twelve long months. The house was choked with her things. We all worked our fingers to the bone. Nobody could turn round without finding a woman and a sewing machine at his back. We never even pretended to hear ourselves speak. Well just as it was all over, and Helen comfortably off our minds, Lizzie must needs set up a lover and a long engagement. John Shaw, too, of all persons! Now I may be dull, but in the name of common sense why John Shaw, of all men in the world?'

'Lizzie knows, I presume.'

'Well, perhaps she does; still, it is provoking. Every morning of his life John Shaw looks in for half an hour on his way down town. And Lizzie absorbs the parlor, of course. That is all right, no doubt; but, as it happens, that particular half hour is precisely the one which I used always to take to tidy up the flowers, water and trim, fill the vases, and make the room nice for the day, and the want of it puts me out dreadfully. I sit and twirl my thumbs, and scold to mother, and she never will agree with me. 'Lovers are privileged,' she says.'

'Of course they are. Don't be a spoilsport, Polly. It's their turn now. Yours will come.'

'Never! But there's more behind. What do you say to Eunice's indulging in an engagement too?'

'Not really?'

'Very really indeed. John Norman is the happy man, this time. Two Johns, you observe, by way of making the confusion greater. So they sit in the dining-room every evening, while Lizzie and her John occupy the parlor.'

'And where do the rest of you sit?'

'Echo answers. We sit wherever we may. Mother takes her mending upstairs, and has a student-lamp on the round table in the upper entry. Papa sits himself up in that dreadful little close 'den' of his, or goes to the office. I observe that he has business there for evenings much oftener than formerly—because there is no comfortable place for him at home, no doubt. Jim makes a point of being out. As for Amy and me, we sit on the back stairs, or in the butler's pantry, or any other odd corner which nobody else wants. Polly laughed, but there were tears in her brown eyes, and a very virtuous look about the pretty mouth, which John Norman, while in process of 'sampling the Patten,' to borrow Polly's own phrase, had once likened to beautiful Evelyn Hope's, of the true 'geranium red.'

'As if all this wasn't enough,' she went on presently with a half giggle, half sob, 'there is a letter come to-day from Fanny Allen—our cousin, you know—and she is engaged too; and she proposes to make us a visit, and her young man means to 'drop along,' forsooth, while she is here. Now where are they to sit? I can't imagine, unless they take the air-chamber of the furnace. The front steps are quite too cold at this time. Or I might have the trunk-room cleared out for them; I hadn't thought of that before.'

'Polly, you are ridiculous. Your cousin will manage that for herself. See if she doesn't. They will take walks, or something.'

'Oh, if they only would! If the whole of it they would 'take walks,' and keep on walking, and never walk this way, how comfortable it would be! Sue, you are abominably tolerant about such matters. That miserable cupid! I wish I could hold his wings in the candle and burn them off. He never flies to do mischief somewhere. How peaceful and happy we all were together before this sort of thing began!'

'Take care,' he will hear you, and he is a revengeful creature. I believe him to be the original 'little pitcher with long ears,''' laughed Susan.

'I don't care if he does hear me,' asserted Polly defiantly.

'Has cupid ears? Certainly it is that matters grew worse rather than better for Polly from that day forward. Fanny Allen came, and in due time her lover, according to programme, and with the latter a cousin, Mr. Othniel Oliphant, a successful merchant, just home from China for a brief visit. His return was not purely for business purposes. Mr. Oliphant was on the look-out for a wife; and with the prompt decision of a mercantile man, he elected Polly Patten for that position on a two days' acquaintance. A firm believer in the faith that 'faint heart never won fair lady,' and 'nothing venture, nothing have,' he offered himself at the end of the week, and quite undiscovered by Polly's dismayed 'no,' sat resolutely down and traced his parallels, resolved to gain by siege what he had failed to win at a coup by assault. This complication set the seal to Polly's discontent.

'For just imagine what a state of things it makes,' she told her confidante Sue. 'There they sit—the three sets of ninnies—one in the parlor, one in the dining-room, one in the 'den,' from which poor papa is turned out bag and baggage; and there is that abominable O! O! (never did man have such suitable initials) looming like doom or a thunder-storm all day long, determined to get me by myself, and 'cultivate my acquaintance.' How can he make me care for him, he says, if he never has the chance to see me alone? It is the most embarrassing, abominable meditation of affairs. I seriously meditate running away to teach school—or something. Home is growing unbearable.'

'Why do you dislike Mr. Oliphant so much? He seems to be very pleasant.'

'Sue when he teases the life out of me! I declare she is blushing. Are you turning traitor too?'

'Not in the least—I don't know what you mean, that is. What I want to tell you of our own case, have I? My brother Jack is coming home next week.'

'How coherent! I declare, Sue, you make me suspect something Jack? He's the one who's been so long in Germany. Well, I hope you'll enjoy him; but pray keep him to yourselves. I've had enough of young men, Johns especially. I never want to see one again as long as I live—I think. Gracious! there's that tiresome O, O, strutting up and down in hopes of catching me as I come out. I declare it is unbearable. Good-by, Sue. I'm going home by the back door, if you don't mind.' And catching up her bonnet, Polly vanished, while Susan Gilmore, with a guilty look in her eyes, and a pair of red, red cheeks, tied laces on, and issuing sedately from the front door, encountered Mr. Oliphant, and presently, under his escort, walked up the street. 'After all,' she thought to herself, 'if Polly can't like him, and doesn't want him, why not? Why not indeed? It was unanswerable.'

Another fortnight passed. Cousin Fanny and her fiance went away, but O, O, still lingered. Polly gave an exclamation of despairing disgust when she learned his intention; but, after all, he did not prove the nuisance she had feared. He had other friends in town by this time, other engagements, and did not haunt the Pattens' house every day, and all day long, as at first. Polly heard of him often at the Gilmore's. She saw little of Sue in those days; Sue was occupied with her brother, just returned after his long absence. Mindful of Polly's interdict, perhaps, she was in no haste to present him to her friend—a fact which Polly was disposed to resent, when, a full week after his arrival, she was at last brought face to face with him. He was quite different from the other Johns, and not at all formidable. Polly thought—tall and spare, quiet in speech and shy in manner, wearing spectacles, too, but altogether very 'nice.' What a myriad of diverse meanings may be included in that word, beloved of girls, 'nice!'

In John Gilmore's case it meant that he did not talk nonsense to Polly, and yet that he seemed to like the nonsense she talked; at least he brightened under it always, and it made him laugh. He never bored her with sense and long explanations, but she was never in his company without finding herself afterward thinking about things which he had said, and looking up little points of information suggested by his talk. He was so kind-hearted, too, always so kind! He didn't sneer at her diatribes against love and lovers; and he seemed to understand and be a little sorry for her, left out in the cold, solitary in the midst of the sisterly circle once so in interest and so closely united. Here was a genuine friend at last, she reflected—a friend of her own, and comforted thereby for her losses, she grew a little more tolerant of the happiness of other people; and even when, a little later, a great wave of surprises and sudden changes broke over the home and all in it, still the tolerance continued.

For, first, John Norman had a partnership offered him in South America, and he and Eunice had to be got ready at two months' notice to sail to their new home. And while Polly was toiling over the hurried preparation which was all that time made possible, Susan Gilmore, her one special friend, called one morning, and with a burst of emotion quite unvoiced in the staid Sue, confided the fact that she was engaged—engaged to O. O., who was the loveliest, dearest man that ever was, though Polly had been so unkind as not to find it out—a fact she (Sue) was very glad of now—and they were to be married in six weeks, and sail for China directly afterward. And would her dearest Polly forgive her, and promise to love O. O. all she possibly could, just for her sake?

'You too?' was all Polly's reply. But she put her arms round Sue's neck with a tear and a sob, all was smooth between them. Sue, who had dreaded the interview, was amazed at Polly's forbearance. A change had evidently come over the spirit of her dream. Trials, we are told, have a chastening effect on the character. Was it her trials which were thus blessed to Polly?

After that, all was bewilderment and confusion dire till the two weddings were over. Eunice and John departed the day after theirs, and a hull fell upon the weary household. Mrs. Patten went upstairs to lie down. Polly, who sighed for fresh air, departed for a walk with John Gilmore, who missed his sister so much, poor fellow! and Amy, the cadette of the family, prepared to celebrate their newly recovered freedom by adorning and making beautiful the dining-room, now rescued from court-purposes, and restored again to the common use of the household.

A busy afternoon, indeed, did little Amy make for herself, but it was a merry one, and she sang as she worked. Every vase in the room she filled with the just blossomed orchard. The curtains were pulled to exactly the ideal angle, the chairs regrouped, all the horrid look taken away. Amy thought, as if the room were meant only for two, and for no one else. It was dusk when she finished, and curling up in the sofa corner, she awaited with impatience Polly's return—Polly, who had hated the love-making as much as she had, and would be so pleased. Polly was the one person in the house of whose sympathy Amy felt quite sure.

She was long in coming, but she came at last. Amy heard her step on the porch, and with it another step, louder, firmer. Surely that tiresome John Gilmore was not coming in to spoil everything this first pleasant night. No; he had come to see papa. Amy heard him tap at the door of the 'den,' while Polly ran upstairs. He emerged as she came down; there was a long confabulation in the entry; but at last the front door shut with a delightful emphasis, and Amy jumped up from the sofa to enjoy the effect of her surprise.

'Come in—oh, do come in!' she cried. 'I want you to see if the dear old room doesn't look lovely. I've been all the afternoon doing it, so that it might be nice for our first evening. Isn't it pleasant to have a room to sit in again? Aren't you glad that the wedding is over, and all the tiresome love-making, and we can have cozy little times at home like other people? Why, Polly, how queer you look! Don't you like it? What makes you do so?—for Polly, half teasing, was kissing and fondling the child.

'Oh, I do, Amy darling. I do like it very much,' pleaded poor Polly, 'but—only—my pet, I'm afraid I'll be very much disappointed; but John Gilmore is coming here this evening to see me, and I'm afraid I shall have to ask you to let us have this room.'

'John Gilmore! Good gracious! Polly Patten—with almost a shriek—'you're not engaged to him? You don't mean that?'

'I—e-e-s,' faltered Polly. 'Oh, Amy dear, don't look so distressed!'

'I will look distressed; I have a right to,' cried Amy, with a burst of sob. 'After all you said! A man named John, too—three Johns in the family! Oh! Polly! And you who declared you hadn't meant John! Well, after this, I never, never will believe in anybody again.'

'Amy, dear, I talked a great deal of nonsense. You must forget it. I didn't know.' But Polly lay in vain. Amy pushed her hand aside, and rushed away to console herself as best she might with a hard fit of crying, and Polly, convicted, repentant, but by no means unhappy, was left behind.

So ended Polly's controversy with cupid. She was vanquished, as Pollys are apt to be in such warfare; but there are defeats which count for more than victories, as we all know, and this may have been one. I regret to say that she never formally apologized for her incontinence, and she took possession of the dining-room every evening without the least apparent perception of the selfishness of the proceeding. Amy was greatly scandalized, but cut bona? To each his turn. Little Amy's will come some day, and then she too will forgive and understand.—Harper's Bazar.

Sometimes think if our rich men would lose half of their money, they would enjoy the other half twice as much. Riches are nothing unless they bring contentment, and no man deserves any particular credit who has worked because he had to, and has been successful because he had no temptations to lead him astray. It is the man who had the chance and the temptation to go to the devil and did not go who is to be praised. The Chinese have a saying that it is not the number of times a man falls that counts in his life, but the number of times he gets up on his feet again.—Horatio Seymour.

A young woman in New York shot her husband by mistake, while examining his pistol. Now we can account for the recent sale in New York of an immense assortment of second-hand pistols.—Phila. Sun.

NOTHING ON EARTH SO GOOD.—Certainly a strong opinion, said one of our reporters to whom the following was dictated by Mr. Henry Kashop, with Mr. Geo. E. Miller, 418 Main street, this city: I suffered so badly with rheumatism in my leg last winter, that I was unable to attend to my work, being completely helpless. I heard of St. Jacobs Oil and bought a bottle, after using which I felt greatly relieved. With the use of the second bottle I was completely cured. In my estimation there is nothing on earth so good for rheumatism as St. Jacobs Oil. It acts like a charm.—Worcester (Mass.) Spy.

Correspondence of the Transcript.  
**A SHORT SOJOURN IN PACHUCA.**  
No. 2.

Recollecting that the plain from which we took the train at the capital, is itself about 8,000 feet above the sea level, and that our destination is up in the mountains, it is quite evident when we get there that for once, if never before, we are 'up in the world'; almost high enough in truth to need no weather prophet to foretell the changes that afflict mortals dwelling on lower plains, and quite enough to warrant the sartorial paradox of wearing an ulster in the heart of the tropics, in mid-summer! Odd, isn't it, Mr. Editor, that the nearer you get to the sun the colder you are? Could you chance to arrive quite at it, you would freeze to death in your ulster.

For all that this town is in the clouds, it yet lies in a narrow valley, or rocky gorge, watered by a mountain stream. The houses are placed in the valley's center, and up the sides at every angle and at every elevation, until the dwellings seem as if glued or tied to the mountain side; so lofty do the top-most come to be that the back-yard is nearly on top of the house, and the cellar about where the garret should be. A point that commends these airy habitations—not to mention an atmosphere unimpeachable, and a prospect unsurpassed—is that their situation discourages the tax-collector, the politician and the lightning-rod man.

It is an English settlement, chiefly made up of Cornishmen who have the national disregard of the propriety of the letter R, which makes the Cockney's 'ome never dear to the true Britain. I certainly never shall forget the effect upon me of a fervent prayer delivered in this fearfully-clipped dialect by a pious exile who besought the 'Hal-mighty Father to 'ear his prayer.' Though not a pietist it really shocked my orthodox ears. Besides this levity in their attitudes, they also speak a frightful lingo, compared with which 'pidgin' English is Attic Greek for euphony, which they style the 'Captain Jack' language. But that it was invented long before our hero of the lava beds, I should say it was called after his well-remembered, handsome face! It would have 'stumped' Sir Wm. Jones or Elihu Burritt. I wish I'd put a yard or so in it in pickle for the edification of the TRANSCRIPT's readers; but I didn't.

As is well known, Mexico and Peru were for over three hundred years, the chief sources of silver for the world. The mines at Pachuca are among the richest in the Republic, and were wrought in ancient times by the Aztecs, then later by the Spaniards, followed by the modern Mexicans, whence they have largely fallen into the hands of foreign capitalists, principally English. Under native management their full productiveness was not realized, so clumsy and inadequate was the machinery used. English owners have, in recent years, introduced more improved methods for mining and reducing the ore, and the native workers are beginning to follow their example to some extent, though they are still mined by a miserable system of peonage, a species of slavery, in which the miserable wretches of the lower classes of Mexican Indians labor in great degradation and poverty.

The common ore is the sulphide of silver which is reduced in the usual manner by amalgamation. The manner of mixing the crushed ore with the mercury is a trade barometer. After passing through the several stages of the operation, the pulverized ore, now wet and doughy, is thrown upon the ground within a large inclosure and numbers of horses are turned into it in order that by a perpetual walk around in the value mire they may thoroughly stir the mass and beget an admixture of the silver and the mercury. The result, so far as the poor equines are concerned, any Eastern Shoreman who has swallowed calomel sufficient to make four gross of thermometers, can readily foresee; their hoofs absorb the mercury till ready to drop off and they perish miserably.

Lack of machinery is not the only or the greatest drawback to the development of these Mexican silver stores of foreign wealth; foreign brains and foreign means might well supply the lack, but that the revolutionary policy of the government has hitherto almost entirely discouraged the attempts of its system of legalized robbery known as 'forced loans,' beneath which shallow pretence of national necessity, the capitalist, is fleeced till interest and principal disappear in the insatiable maw of war. Enterprising operators might suffer this enforced blood letting, once, say every four years, or even once every year, and set the outfit down to the credit of profit and loss. But in this precarious land, where fruits, trees, mountains, fevers and snakes come to such perfection, revolutions are frequent as the seasons, and as each one is poorer than its predecessor its demands upon the coffers of the merchant are depleting altogether. So rather than be plundered in this fashion by each barbaric Alaric who rides over the land, they allow their rich possessions to lie idle.

They expect to be robbed by marauding bands who steal professionally, and not 'borrow' never to pay, as their less frank compatriots do, and take precautions accordingly, living often in embattled castles flanked with strong keeps, filled with arms, culverin mounted, portullis poised, or, perhaps, veritably dwelling in 'moated granges'—in short, quite like feudal barons of the thirteenth century.

But when the scales of justice are balanced with the sword and the very arm that lifts the mantle of magistracy presents the pistol of the highwayman, the small wonder the victims decline furnishing the help that is to hang them. But of this and kindred topics, more anon.

ORNAMENTAL TOUCHES.

How many houses are spoiled by the very things intended for their adornment! how many rooms made to look tawdry and ill-furnished by the trash collected on the mantel and tables, and every possible point of notice!

Comparatively few people, either with means or without, can furnish a house so that it will have an expression of individuality, and look as though every room were lived, in which is the real object of a house that is a home as well; but it is especially in the ornamental part that so many fail—the mantels, tables, brackets, and corners. And yet success in these matters is by no means difficult. With 'money no object,' there are always for the mantel the regulation candelabra and bronzes, that escape vulgarly, if not particularly original; for the country house a gem of a picture—not necessarily 'an old master,' or any master at all. If him about the superior head production of Prang's chromes, yet bright, sunny and suggestive.

The abomination of dried grasses—some of them being artificially colored in addition to their dryness—is a style of mantel ornament that always makes us feel like inviting a cow or a horse in to make away with its lawful fodder. Such things are doubtless pretty in some combinations; in a corner, for instance, reaching very high from the floor in a tall vase, and tastefully mixed with autumn leaves; but not in mantel jars, and not too much of them anywhere.

There is nothing prettier on a mantel than candlesticks—real silver if possible, and hedged about with the divinity of having belonged to one's grandmother, or great-grandmother; but failing this, anything. Even putty would not be bad moulded into shape and gilded; but this is an original idea, and we think of taking out a patent for it. A globe-lamp, too, over a reading-table, swinging in a gilt triangle, and candlesticks of the same shape, holding candles warranted not to 'run,' make charming illuminations, however humble the foundation material may be.

And while we are upon the subject of ornament, how few people ever seem to think of an open fire in this connection—the prettiest piece of furniture, as some one has said, that can be put into a room, softening plain common surroundings with its beautiful dancing light, and making such a cheerful glow in a gloomy scene that it is almost impossible to remain sad beside it. Sydney Smith's prescription of a bright fire, an entertaining book, and a box of sugar-plums as an infallible cure for the blues is unfortunately not within the reach of every one; but the open fire, at least, is within the reach of many who do not avail themselves of it.

A fire is more trouble, of course, than the hole in the wall known as a register, and that either puffs forth heat (all but the flames) like the dragon of old, or turns a cold shoulder to the chilled unfortunate who depend upon it as their only hope of getting warm. It is more care, and it makes dirt; so the housekeeper banishes it from the range of possibilities, and expends money and strength on something that does not yield half the returns, either in the way of ornament or comfort, that the open fire does.

Let there be a furnace by all means, to heat the halls and ordinary rooms, but an open fire and crimson curtains to warm the 'gathering' room in the winter twilight or snow-storm; some growing vines, too—hardly things that will do well anywhere, and not prove a delusion and a snare by ever holding out the promise of blossoms which they know they don't mean to fulfill.

Brackets should be something more than shelves; and unless it was to be covered, we should protest against any of our ever making one at home. A horn carver might, perhaps, venture upon it. But not an ordinary amateur in tools. Two of the prettiest brackets we ever saw were made of scarlet flannel with worsted fringe. They supported busts of Parian marble, and harmonized in coloring with the other appointments of the room.

Crash towels sounds cheap by way of ornamental coverings, and it is much in use at the present time; but it must be remembered that it is like pumpkin pies—nothing if not highly seasoned and mixed with expensive ingredients. The towel-workers soon find that silks, and flosses, and cloth, in many colors and designs, must go to the seasoning of their manufactures before they can be called things of beauty.—Floral Cabinet.

Mark Twain having been asked to contribute to the newspaper issued at the fair in aid of abused children in Boston, wrote: 'Why should I want a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children' to prosper, when I have a baby down stairs that kept me awake several hours last night with no pretext for it but a desire to make trouble? This occurs every night, and it embitters me, because I see now how needless it was to put in the other burglar alarm, a costly and complicated contrivance, which cannot be depended upon, because it's always getting out of order and won't 'go'; whereas, although the baby is always getting out of order, too, it can, nevertheless, be depended on for the reason that the more it gets out of order the more it does go. Yes, I am bitter against your society, for I think the idea of it is all wrong; but if you will start a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Fathers I will write you a whole book.'

GETTING WOOD MIXED.

The greatest sensation was created in La Crosse on Tuesday morning by the explosion of a stove in a dry goods store. The stove was mixed up with the calico, one leg resting across a box of corsets, and pieces everywhere. The theory is that some person had a grudge against the proprietor, and attempted to blow him up by putting powder in his wood, one stick being found with a hole a foot long in it. May be the store clerk got a stick of wood off the wrong pile. It sometimes occurs that way.

By the way, does a man named Conant live next to the store? What makes us ask is, that we once had an office next door to Conant's office, and we both kept our wood in the same closet. We burned slabs and Conant burned round oak wood with the bark on. It beat all, but a cord of our slabs would last as long as two cords of Conant's oak wood. We didn't notice it so much, but Conant often spoke of it, and we have spent hours arguing with him about the superior head production of pine slabs over hard oak wood. We tried to prove to him the economy of burning slabs, and finally he said he thought there was economy in it, if a neighbor had plenty of oak wood. The thing went on half the winter, until Conant got so he was more distant towards us than usual, though as long as his wood was not so distant we did not worry. But Conant became studious. His mind seemed occupied over some great problem, and he would occasionally laugh right out loud when going after an armful of wood. One day we had a good slab fire in the office, and it was thought that if a small stick of Conant's round oak wood was put on, the fire would last longer, and as he had often told us to make ourself at home, we took a stick and put it on. About six minutes the fire went out and the place was as cold as a barn. We looked in the stove and the oak stick was gone, and there was about two bushels of wet ashes in the stove. We built up another slab fire, and brought in another stick of Conant's wood, and just as we shut the door of the stove Conant came in. 'How does your slab wood burn this cold weather,' said he, as he put the toe of his boot on the stove door to open it. We told him the slab wood was all right enough, only it was sort of remittent. It would get up a heat that was enough to drive us all out doors, and then all turn into water. Just then the fire began to go down and Conant said he thought he could explain it. He opened the door of the stove, and the bark had burned off of the big stick of oak wood, and there was a chunk of ice melting on our slabs. He had peeled the bark off of some of his wood, and filled the cylinder with ice, and left it for us, and we had caught it. 'Do you find that ice helps slab wood any?' said he, as he kicked the fast melting ice. We told him that we were experimenting on a new patent for burning ice, and if we could make it work there would be millions in it, and the fuel question would be solved, and the poor would have a soft thing. We have always thought, and think so still, that Conant didn't believe us. Well, we don't know as Conant would put powder